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SOURCE Wirtschaftsdienst; No 5, 1950.EAST GERMANY'S SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY

East Germany's shipbuilding industry was expanded greatly during 1949 and by the end of that year it had surpassed prewar capacity. While only 1,100 workers were occupied in East German shipyards in 1945, the number increased to 9,000 at the end of 1947, 13,000 at the end of 1948, and 27,000 at the end of 1949.

There was hardly any shipbuilding industry left in East Germany after the end of World War II, and only Mecklenburg had access to the sea. All the large shipyards had come under Soviet administration, e.g., Kaliningrad, or Polish administration, e.g., Elblag, Gdansk, and Szczecin. Only the Neptun Shipyard in Rostock, which cannot be considered a large one, remained in East Germany; in 1946, along with other smaller shipyards, it became an SAG enterprise. In spite of heavy war damage, work was resumed at the end of 1945 in the Rosslau Shipyard, in the Rothensee Shipyard in Magdeburg, in the Ernst-Thaelmann Shipyard in Branédeburg, in the Elbe Shipyard in Boizenburg, and in the Stralsund Shipyard.

Soviet Military Administration Order No 103 led to the expansion of existing shipyards and to the construction of a number of new ones. Construction of fishing vessels, mainly for reparation deliveries, was started in the middle of 1946. At first the vessels built were of the Seiner class, a type between a cutter and a lugger. Parts of these ships were built in inland shipyards and assembled in the shipyards on the Baltic coast. The large Wismar Ship Repair Yard was built in 1947 at a cost of 25 million Deutsche marks. It has 13 shops, one of them measuring 100 x 150 meters, 26 crane installations, and one gantry crane with a 10-ton load capacity.

The Peene Shipyard in Wolgast and the Bodden Shipyard in Damgarten were built in 1948. During the same period the people-owned Stralsund Shipyard and the Warnow Shipyard in Warnemuende were greatly enlarged. East Germany's shipyards turned out a total of 60 cutters and seven ships of the Seiner class in 1948; 12 of the cutters were made available for the newly created German fishing fleet.

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The VVW (Association of People-Owned Shipyards), with its central office in Schwerin, Friedrichstrasse 5-7, was created in July 1948; in it were merged all the large East German shipyards (except the Neptun Shipyard in Rostock) and a number of inland shipyards. In 1949, 60 million Deutsche marks were invested in the shipyard construction program, and a total of 50 luggers, 26 Seiner-type ships, and 80 cutters were built during that year. Additional production increases can be expected in 1950 because much of the expansion work was completed in 1949, e.g., the Stralsund Shipyard, which completed its first fishing lugger on 7 November 1949, will build 100 luggers 38.5 meters long, 7.5 meters wide, and of 100-ton capacity in 1950. The Peene Shipyard in Wolgast started production in July and built 25 luggers and Seiner-type ships during the remaining months of 1949.

Great emphasis is placed on reducing man-hours by assembly line production of prefabricated parts or sections of ships. Whereas 240,000 man-hours were required to build the first lugger, only 140,000 man-hours were needed for the seventh one, and it is planned to reduce the number of man-hours required to 90,000.

Bottlenecks in the shipbuilding industry are the lack of shipbuilding engineers and experts, lack of housing for workers, and the poor quality of parts which are supplied to the shipyards particularly castings, steel plates, etc.

In addition to the Soviet-owned Neptun Shipyard in Rostock, which employed 3,680 workers at the beginning and 6,182 at the end of 1949, there are six large and 26 smaller shipyards in East Germany. The most important ones are: the Warnow Shipyard in Warnemuende, which employed over 5,000 workers at the end of 1949, the Wismar Ship Repair Yard with 4,022 workers, the Stralsund Shipyard with 3,929 workers, the Bodden Shipyard in Damgarten with 2,099 workers, the Elbe Shipyard in Boizenburg with 1,981 workers, and the Peene Shipyard in Wolgast, with 1,083 workers.

In addition to the aforementioned large shipyards, the following enterprises belong to the VVW: the Ship Salvage, Repair, and Building Yard in Stralsund; the Ship's Lantern Plant in Ueckermuende; the Ernst-Thaelmann Shipyard in Brandenburg/Havel; the Rosslau Shipyard in Dessau-Rosslau; and the Staatswerft Shipyard in Magdeburg-Rothensee. There are a total of 18 inland shipyards in Sachsen-Anhalt, including Rosslau and Rothensee, employing approximately 1,800 workers. The Rosslau and Rothensee shipbuilding yards, and the Altenplatow, Magdeburg, and Tangermuende repair yards, which are supposed to change over to shipbuilding, are people-owned enterprises.

Privately owned shipbuilding yards are H. Schuetze in Aken and Bolle Bros in Derben, while all other privately owned enterprises work only as repair yards. The Sachsen inland shipyards in Dresden-Uebigau, Dresden-Laubegast, and Postelwitz, which do both shipbuilding and repair, belong to the Sachsen Association of People-Owned Enterprises for Shipping and Transshipment. The most important shipbuilding enterprise in Brandenburg is the people-owned Berlin-Koepenick Yacht-Building Plant, formerly Claus Engelbrecht Shipyard, which produces mainly sailboats.

The turnover of East Germany's shipyards rose from 690,000 Deutsche marks in 1945 to 80 million Deutsche marks in 1949.

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